
FW: ACP-324165-26 — Response to Section 4.3.2

From SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>

Date Thu 9/10/2026 2:24 PM

To Honor Caird Marren <honor.cairdmarren@pleanala.ie>

 1 attachment (12 KB)

Emma_Ahles_Section_4.3.2_Response-1.pdf;

From: Emma Ahles <ahles.emma@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday 10 September 2026 1:49 pm

To: SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>

Subject: ACP-324165-26 — Response to Section 4.3.2

[You don't often get email from ahles.emma@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Caution: This is an External Email and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Dear Sir or Madam,

Further to the Commission's letter of 14 August 2026, please find attached my response to Section 4.3.2 (Nature Conservation) of the applicant's Response to Observations in case ACP-324165-26.

I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt.

Kind

Emma Ahles

Faraway Place, Ards More, Bantry, Co. Cork, P75 Y895

Sent from my iPhone

Emma Ahles

Faraway Place, Ards More, Bantry, Co. Cork, P75 Y895

An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1

Re: ACP-324165-26 — Maughanaclea Renewable Energy Development

Response to Section 4.3.2 (Nature Conservation) of the applicant's Response to Observations

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in response to the Commission's letter of 14 August 2026 inviting observations on the applicant's Response to Observations, received by the Commission on 14 July 2026. This response is confined to Section 4.3.2 (Nature Conservation) of that document. It does not withdraw or qualify any part of my original observation of May 2026, including the concerns I raised there about noise.

In my original observation I told the Commission that our valley supports pine marten, Irish hare, a wide variety of birdlife, and the white-tailed sea eagle, and that I was not satisfied the assessment had captured the extent of that life or the risk to it. Having read Section 4.3.2, I remain unsatisfied, for two reasons.

The eagle

At page 35 of the Response to Observations (Section 4.3.2.1), the applicant states: "Because of the absence of flights within the Proposed Wind Farm site, it was not possible to calculate a formal estimate of predicted collisions." On the previous page, the same document acknowledges that the white-tailed eagle has been noted near the site and that there have been "several casualties along the Kerry/Cork border."

I would ask the Commission to place those two sentences side by side. The applicant accepts that this reintroduced and protected bird is present in the area and that eagles in this very border country have already been killed — and then concludes that because none happened to cross the site boundary during survey hours, no formal collision estimate is needed. The submission of the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (ref. SID-CK-2026-011, 25 May 2026) records that an adult female white-tailed eagle was killed at Grousemount wind farm in 2025, approximately 5 km north of this site, and that turbine strikes account for 19% of white-tailed eagle casualties where the cause of death has been established (WTE Phase II release report, 2025, NPWS). Section 4.3.2 does not answer that evidence. It steps around it.

The lights at night

My family has watched this valley's night sky for nearly thirty years, and I described in my original observation what its darkness means — not only to us, but to the nocturnal wildlife that depends on it. The Response to Observations confirms, at Section 4.2 (page 34), that the applicant is agreeable to the Department of Defence condition requiring all fourteen turbines to carry medium-intensity fixed red obstacle lighting of a minimum 2,000 candela, visible in all directions and operational 24 hours a

day, 7 days a week. The consented Dreenacreenig West development on the far side of our valley carries the same lighting on all three of its turbines (its EIAR, Section 13.8.5).

Yet every bird survey underpinning Section 4.3.2 was carried out in daylight. There is no nocturnal flight data at all. NatureScot's information note, "The Effect of Aviation Obstruction Lighting on Birds at Wind Turbines, Communication Towers and Other Structures," identifies attraction of birds to artificial light — phototaxis — as the principal concern with obstruction lighting. The applicant does not reference it, or the issue, anywhere. A permanent, all-night lighting scheme on both sides of a dark valley has simply not been assessed for its effect on the nature it will shine on.

What I ask

I want to be plain about what I am asking, because it is not for more paperwork. Section 4.3.2 steps around the recorded deaths of a protected eagle in this very border country, and it commits to lighting a dark valley all night, every night, without ever once having looked at that valley at night. Those are not gaps a further report can paper over — they show an assessment that was never equal to the place it describes, and no version of this development, however assessed, belongs on these hills. I respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for this development.

I would be grateful if the Commission would acknowledge receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Ahles

Faraway Place, Ards More, Bantry, Co. Cork, P75 Y895